Equality of Opportunity and Freedom from Discrimination

MHR Connections

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THE MANITOBA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

LA COMMISSION DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE DU MANITOBA

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Seven Manitobans to receive Human Rights Awards

The Manitoba Human Rights Commission, the Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties, and the Canadian Human Rights Commission proudly announce the recipients of the 2012 Human Rights Awards.

The Annual Human Rights Commitment Award of Manitoba recognizes those who have promoted respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and have advanced the rights of Manitobans.

The Recipients of the 2012 Human Rights Commitment Award of Manitoba are:

Jane Burpee

· **Jane Burpee**, Education Coordinator with the Manitoba Schizophrenia Society

· **The Rainbow Resource Centre**, a major resource and support centre serving Manitoba's gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual, Transgendered and Two Spirited GLBTT communities

Louise Simbandumwe

· **Louise Simbandumwe**, Director of SEED Winnipeg's Asset Building Programs and founder of Run for Rights

The Annual Sybil Shack Human Rights Youth Award recognizes the work of a person or group of people, 25 years old and under that has had an impact on the advancement of human rights as guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and human rights legislation in Manitoba.

Muuxi Adam

The recipients of the Sybil Shack Human Rights Youth award for 2012 are:

·**Ayla and Van Hamilton** of Major Pratt School, Russell Manitoba

·**Muuxi Adam,** After School Program Coordinator at the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba

·**Chelsea Caldwell**, a second year student at the University of Winnipeg

Everyone is encouraged to attend the award reception in honour of this year's recipients. The reception will be held at the United Way Building, 580 Main Street, on December 6, 2012 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The recipients will receive their awards at 6:30pm. There is no charge, however, if you wish to attend, please register at www.manitobahumanrights.ca or http://manitobahumanrightsawards.eventbrite.ca or call Patricia at 204-945-5112.

The Rights Connections
by Jerry Woods - Chairperson

At his swearing-in ceremony on November 2, 2012, Winnipeg Police Chief Devon Clunis declared that Winnipeg will become a safer city. More importantly he said, "*We* will do this, not *I*."

Those words resonated at the final Racialized Communities and Police Services (RCAPS) Project round table discussion held a few days later at the Commission. Many community leaders came to the table to let the new Chief know if, or how, their relationship with the Winnipeg Police Service has changed over the last seven years when the project was initiated. By the end of this last meeting, there was sense of optimism in the room.

The community leaders said they have noticed change, some acknowledging that there are now better channels of communications, especially at the agency or organization level. All admit the process of change is slow and has its frustrations. Most agreed that work still needs to be done at the street level. It is believed that fear and misunderstanding of the police exists within many immigrant and Aboriginal communities and a few leaders cited racial comments and overly aggressive behaviour by police. As well there continues to be a call for sustained community policing and education on both sides.

Chief Clunis listened to each community leader and then addressed them. He talked about his own background as a young immigrant growing up in Winnipeg's North End. He said there was ample opportunity to get into trouble but eventually decided that he would not get involved in something that would rob him of his future. He made a decision to become a police officer and has never looked back.

Responding to the continued call for community policing, Chief Clunis said there will be more officers on the frontlines responding to calls for service.

He also spoke of social development as a fundamental philosophy of how to police the city, and stated emphatically that he would like to work cooperatively in addressing social issues with everyone present.

As we prepare the final report on the RCAPS Project, the Commission believes that there is reason for optimism and would like to accept the Police Chief's commitment to continue working together.

Life changing event

By Justin Sarides

On October 30, I arrived early to We Day Manitoba, watched as 18,000 young people packed the MTS Centre, and prayed that my hearing would be intact by the end of the four hour spectacular.

We Day is an event organized by the Canadian charity "Free the Children." Admission to the event is free, but to earn entry schools must pledge one local and one international difference-making effort to pursue over the school year. It is designed to empower youth to speak out against injustice, and lead local and global change.

The event featured an array of musicians, and speakers, most notably former Soviet Leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner Mikhail Gorbachev, who had the greatest impact on me. He spoke about his life and his upbringing and ways young people can make a difference here and now. He concluded by stating that the number one priority for future generations should be peace.

Among the 18,000 present was 17 year old Oak Park student Katie Duff. Katie attended last year's We Day, and was so inspired that she convinced her teachers to learn more about Free the Children. Soon Katie and some of her peers were selling Free the Children's Rafiki Chains at school. Each Rafiki Chain sold provides clean water for one year, to a person in a developing country. As well as selling Rafiki Chains, Katie started collecting pennies; she has already collected almost $45 dollars and has no plan to stop. Each $25 dollars she collects goes towards providing clean water for someone in a developing country, and not just for a year, for the rest of their life.

Also in June 2013, this young philanthropist is going to Kenya for 11 days to build a school with 25-30 other students. Katie and her classmates raised the money through various fundraisers and her school is now recognized as an official Me to We school. Katie says that she was very affected by Spencer West, the man born without legs who climbed Mount Kilimanjaro. She adds that We Day inspired her to "become a photojournalist and change the world through pictures and film, and go to developing countries to show people the change that's needed."

We Day is an incredible experience, and for some, life changing. It gives youth tangible ways to make a difference locally and on a larger scale. As well as inspiring, We Day is also informative and shows how lucky we are to live in a country where we don't need to worry about clean water and mass illiteracy. I know, for myself, that We Day has changed how I view the world, and I can guarantee that it has changed how thousands of others view it as well.

Justin Sarides is a student at Glenlawn Collegiate in Winnipeg

Join the Manitoba Human Rights Commission, the Canadian Human Rights Commission and the Association for Rights and Liberties as we celebrate International Human Rights Day by honouring the recipients of the 2012 Human Rights Awards.

This reception is free but registration is required as space is limited;
Date: Thursday, December 6, 2012
Place: United Way Building 580 Main Street, Winnipeg
Time 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm (Awards ceremony at 6:30 pm)
Register on line:
http://manitobahumanrightsawards.eventbrite.ca or
www.mantiobahumanrights.ca
For more information please call 204-945-5112

Wade Kojo Williams 1949-2012

For twenty-five years, Wade Kojo Williams organized Black History Month every February. Mr. Williams founded many human rights organizations including the Manitoba Coalition of Organizations Against Apartheid and Racism, Students Against Apartheid, as well as the Calypso Association of Winnipeg. Mr. Williams passed away on November 3, 2012.

Human Rights dispute resolved by the Supreme Court of Canada

The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled on the adequacy of special education services in B.C. public schools.

The decision resolves a 15-year dispute between North Vancouver School District and the family of Jeffrey Moore. In the early 1990s, Jeffrey was diagnosed as dyslexic and in need of special education in the district's Diagnostic Centre. When the district cut the centre to save money, the Moore family had to put Jeffrey in a private school at the family's expense.

Earlier this year, the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) heard the appeal in Moore v. British Columbia (Education). The Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta Human Rights Commissions jointly intervened in the appeal. The Manitoba, Quebec and Canadian Commissions also intervened before the SCC.

On November 9, 2012, in a unanimous Decision by Justice Abella J, the SCC agreed with the original Tribunal Decision that the North Vancouver District School Board (the District) had discriminated against Jeffrey Moore.

Jeffrey is now a young man working as a plumber.

The Manitoba Human Rights Commission is pleased with this outcome as it acknowledges the right of children with severe learning disabilities to have meaningful access to education.